

# THOR, THE NORWEGIAN.

By Frederic Van Rensselaer Dey.

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There is no place in all the world so desolate, particularly when a nor'-west gale had been on the rampage for three successive days, lashing the sea into a fury of foam and turmoil, as that part of the North Sea where it washes against the western coast of the peninsula of Denmark. At such times the air is frost laden and numbing, even in midsummer. The water itself is of an ominous, leaden tint, like a battleship with her war-paint on. Even the foam which caps the waves is not white and flaky, as it is in the southern zones, but seems to have been adulterated with some refuse tint suggestive of the dirty suds of wash-day. The wind is as erratic as the waves which chop unmercifully; it howls and shrieks and roars with deadly energy for a time and then moans sullenly while it generates new forces for a more furious onslaught. Deeper-sea sailors dread this region and avoid it when they can, but the amphibious Norwegian and the storm-born Dane love it as a savage loves the wilderness.

If you should study one of the older charts of this bad-tempered sea you would discover that fifty-two miles off the coast of Denmark, by the compass north-west from Tyboron, there looms a rock with an unpronounceable Danish name, which, being translated into English means the Devil's Nose. At the present time it has disappeared, for upon it had stranded so many vessels and it was due the loss of so many lives and so much property that the Danish and the German governments united to destroy it. It is not located on the charts in use today and the deepest draught vessel may now pass over the spot in safety.

Originally it loomed 64 feet into the air, and from the westward had the appearance of a huge nose, the more so when the tide was low, for then at the water's edge could be seen indentations that had been ground out by centuries of pounding waves, and these cavities were the nostrils of this mammoth proboscis. To the eastward it extended from the summit to the water at an angle of 23 degrees. This part of the rock was concave in form, and it broadened as it descended until it finally disappeared beneath the water like the tines of a pitchfork, leaving a sheltered bay about fifty feet in length by 30 in breadth, and as deep as the sea itself. Many a belated craft returning by a furious nor'-west, found shelter here before the rock was destroyed, and in the little bay, rode out the gale in safety; and it was just such an occasion as this which one afternoon in August com-



Approaching the "Devil's Nose."

pelled two men, the sole occupants of a sloop-ripped craft, to seek the little haven of refuge.

The gale had come upon them almost without warning. They had reefed and double reefed their sails, but the wind, as if it enjoyed their discomfiture, increased its strength in proportion as they reduced the resistance to it, so that at last they were obliged to send before it, with only sail enough left standing to give them steerage way.

One of these men almost a giant in stature, held the tiller and watched with unerring eyes the play of the savage water around them. He knew these waters as the half-grown child knows the dooryard of its birthplace, and he loved the sea, the leaping waves and the rushing wind with a passion that was hereditary. He loved it, and he delighted to defy its dangers. His companion held the sheet rope, which notwithstanding the fact that he had taken two turns around the cleat, was with each fresh gust of wind, almost snatched from his grasp.

"We'll make the Devil's Nose, Craddock," said the big man at the helm, "and we'll be there in 10 minutes' time. Pass the sheet to me. I can hold it with my left hand. Now take the heaving line and go forward. Make one end fast to the capstan, tie the other end around your wrist, and when I round to into the little bay, jump and swim for your life! She'll have headway enough to carry her into the neck of the cove, but not a bit more. There is an iron ring set in the rock near the point on the north shore and another at the head of the cove. If you can make one of them, and get a hitch through it before the line pulls taut, we will be as safe as a church. Put your clasp knife in your teeth, Crad, and if you cannot make one of the rings in time, cut yourself adrift and swim ashore and wait. I'll ride out the gale alone, and then I'll come back for you. Go forward now! Not a word! I'm captain of this craft."

When the sloop was again upon the summit of a wave Craddock, from his position at the bow, could see the huge rock to which his companion had referred. He had heard him describe it many times, but he had never seen it before.

There is nothing so deadly uncer-

tain in the life of a sailor as running straight before a gale of wind. Billows, like mountains, tower in front and rear up out of the sea's depth astern, making destruction appear inevitable. And there is an angry swish and a resentful seething in the rushing water as it hits the stern on high and hurls the craft like an arrow from a bow before it. But neither of these men seemed to realize the danger they were in, or if they realized it, they were careless concerning it. And while he at the stern stood with feet apart, his right hand grasping the tiller and his left firmly holding the straining sheet, Craddock prepared himself for the leap he was to make, upon the success of which their safety depended.

From a small thing in the distance, the Devil's Nose loomed greater and mightier as they advanced. It seemed to be rushing toward them at fearful speed, growing taller and mightier, and more ominous as it approached. The waves beat against it with savage fury and clouds of spray and chunks of water were hurled almost to the summit.

It seemed to Craddock as they drove onward, as if his friend was steering straight for the forbidden rock; but he never looked astern. He knew that the hand that held the tiller was strong, tried and sure.

Then came the mighty boom of the added waters against the barrier of rock and the yacht was enveloped in a shower of foam and mist through which, half obscured, the black monument towered. The helmsman released his hold upon the sheet, the boom flew forward with a sudden crash against the shrouds, the sloop keeled over to starboard until her deck was half submerged in water and she came about like the snapping of a whip. It was at that instant that Craddock made his leap.

Twenty minutes later the sloop was safely moored within the little bay, which was as placid as a mill pond, and the two men were snug in the cabin with nothing but the roar of the rushing wind above them and the booming of the water against the western extremity of the rock to remind them of the perils through which they had just passed.

While the storm raged on and daylight became smothered by advancing night, they cooked and ate their supper, and smoked their pipes in tranquil security. Why they were where they were, overtaken by a furious gale in the most dangerous part of the North Sea, does not matter, but if a coast guard, or a customs officer could have inspected the articles that were stored away in secret lockers aboard the sloop, he might have called them by the now almost obsolete term, smugglers. Ostensibly, however, the sloop was nothing more than a mere pleasure boat, and they, two venturesome sailors, who found it possible to navigate a craft which ordinarily should have carried a crew of four or five.

After they had disposed of their coffee, he who had held the helm through the storm of the preceding night, and brought the sloop safely into this strange retreat, said to his companion, while they stood together at the bow.

"Craddock, this pile of nature's masonry contains the unwritten epitaphs of thousands who have perished here. It has other secrets, too, and one of them I have discovered, and will show you. Do you think, if we climb to the summit yonder, that you can keep your hold upon the slippery rock against the gale?"

Craddock shrugged his shoulders, and, without reply, turned toward the dingy which had already been launched and was moored on the port side of the sloop. They sculled it quickly to the head of the bay, and soon began the precarious ascent of the Devil's Nose. Two-thirds of the distance to the summit they came upon a level space no bigger than a dining table, which in the center was clef apart, leaving a space not more than two feet wide and as dark as midnight within, and into this forbidding place the big man, without explanation or hesitation, dropped. Craddock followed, and a moment later they stood in a natural cavern that was created when the rock was formed.

"I doubt," said the leader, "if there lives another man today who knows of the existence of this cavern. Hark! Do you hear that whistling moan? It is like the vibration of a hundred aeolian harps. I have a lantern here; wait till I strike a light and I will show you something grander than you ever saw before." Then, presently he led the way up the slippery rock, and as they advanced, the weird moaning and whistling became louder and shriller, until it seemed as if there were living things hovering around them and shrieking in their ears. It was the voice of the gale as it rushed through an opening in the rock high over their heads; and after they had mounted to it, Craddock saw his friend put the lantern down; then his arm was seized in a firm grasp, and he was led around a jutting boulder into the light of day.

The wind struck them like a blow and for a moment forced them back again, but they held their ground and presently stood upon a ledge formed by an indentation which Nature had left in the mighty mass, with scarce three fathoms above their heads.

The view was grand and awful. The storm was at its height. Black clouds rushed toward them and above them like chargers of a Hadean host. Seas, mountains high, plume-crested with white foam tumbled onward in mad expostulation to be shattered

against the rock on which they stood, which of itself did not even tremble. Craddock loved such scenes with not less passion than his friend, and ran arethred usoo eideacein w artl while he stood entranced, his arm was seized again with crushing force, and the voice of his friend, but faintly heard above the tempest, shouted in his ear:

"Look yonder, Crad! Look there!" and with his disengaged hand he pointed straight to windward.

Scarcely a mile away and driving toward them with the speed of a locomotive, was a schooner yacht under bare poles, rolling and pitching and tossing, now half submerged beneath torrents of water that fell upon her from the pursuing waves, and again appearing like a helpless chip upon the summit of an angry sea.

She seemed to be making straight for the Devil's Nose. Upon her deck a dozen forms were visible, lashed to their places to prevent being swept away by wind and water.

As she drove onward nearer and nearer, Craddock's companion again shouted in his ear:

"I know her, Crad. It is the favorite yacht of the Princess Charlotte of Denmark. God grant that she may not be aboard it now. She loves the sea as we love it. Crad, and look, for God's sake, look!" He pointed with his disengaged hand, and Craddock saw the figure of a woman trapped in a cork jacket, lashed to the binnacle of the beleaguered yacht which was now not more than 20 fathoms from the rock.

At the very instant that the two men discovered her, a mighty wave rolled up over the stern, and broke in mid air, overwhelming the yacht with a flood of water that crushed and made a wreck of her before their eyes.

For two seconds they gazed spell-bound upon the scene, and then without a word of warning or intention,



"There is Between us a Divinity of Love."

Craddock's companion leaped upward and outward, and plunged head downward to the water, 50 feet below.

Craddock did not move. He stood as if petrified, clinging with both hands to the rock from which the wind seemed determined to hurl him; and he gazed with every faculty concentrated in his eyes upon the awful scene of wreckage and destruction. The yacht careened over, half filled with water and surely foundering, was thrown by the violence of the wave that struck her out of line with the Devil's Nose, and almost before there was time to realize the awful thing that had happened, she had passed beyond his view to leeward. He was dimly conscious that the binnacle and wheel and all the after-rigging of the yacht had been torn loose and swept away in the vortex, and with them had disappeared the figures of the woman and of the two men who were lashed to the wheel.

Then almost directly beneath the spot where he stood, on the crest of a wave, and breasting it with the power of a giant, he saw his friend. Beyond him, in the trough of the sea, another figure appeared. Then both were lost to view.

There was no sign of excitement in Craddock's face or manner. He turned with deliberation, passed around the jutting rock into the cavern, found the ship's lantern still down and on, through the cleft into the open air, thence hurriedly to the water's edge, and in a moment more he was in the dingy, sculling rapidly past the sloop toward the open sea.

When he had reached a certain point beyond which it would have been folly to have ventured, by artfully working his oar, he held the little craft almost stationary, while he, standing upright, shading his eyes with his disengaged hand, gazed eagerly to windward. He seemed also to listen. Presently high above the roar of the wind and waters the strange, weird war of a yodel song in minor key came to him. A moment later he saw the form of his friend swimming toward him with powerful strokes, and clinging to his back, with her arms around his neck, was the cork-jacketed woman of the wreck.

White and wan and drenched, yet conscious, with something infinitely pathetic in her wonder and amazement, they assisted her along the sloop's deck to the cabin. It was Craddock who entered with her, and from a locker he selected clothing of his own, which he laid out upon the berth; until then there had been on word spoken.

"Madam," he said, pausing beneath the hatch, "do you understand English?"

She replied with an inclination of her head, and he added, "This is the only dry clothing I can offer you. There is brandy on the table. If there is more that I can do, you have but to call through the hatch." He turned then to leave her, but she detained him by a gesture.

"Tell me," she demanded, with nervous intensity, "who is the man who

took me from the sea?"

"He is a Norwegian, madam; by name Torgensen," she murmured. "A Norwegian, Thor. Tell him that he has saved the life of a daughter of the King of Denmark."

When Craddock returned to the deck, he found his friend stretched at full length at the bow, lying upon his back, with his eyes fixed upon the coursing clouds, and there was an indescribable smile upon his face. He seemed to have forgotten that he was bedraggled and wet, and that his tawny hair and beard were matted and unkempt, and as Craddock paused beside him, he turned his big blue eyes upon his friend, and said:

"Who is she, Craddock?"

"She told me," said Craddock calmly, in reply, "to tell you that you had saved the life of a daughter of the King of Denmark."

The Norwegian did not immediately respond. There was a dreamy, far-away look in his eyes, and presently he murmured:

"The daughter of a king. I am glad of that. The daughter of a king. Yes, I am glad of that."

He ceased speaking, rose slowly to his feet, and standing before his friend, said in that same half-dreamy tone:

"Shall I tell you how it happened, Crad? It seemed when I stood up there on the rock, and saw that wave hang over her, ready to fall and crush, as though I heard her cry aloud to me to save her, and I leaped. How I found her I do not know, but when I came to the surface she was near to me, and I seemed to leap through the water, impelled by greater strength than I ever possessed before. Then—why, then it seemed as if there was no danger, and I remember that I laughed and told her to put her arms around my neck, and somehow Crad, it seemed as if she felt the same as I, that the wind and the

mark. His strong and noble face wore an expression of introspection which could not be confounded with anxiety and frequently he ran his fingers through the wavy, tawny masses of his hair, as if by doing so some obstacle to collected reflection might be dispelled. He kept his place at the bow and gazed, not at the sea, as did his friend, but upward, toward the summit of the Devil's Nose, and there was anger in his eyes and means in the expression of his face.

At last Thor drew near to him again.

"I cannot help it, Craddock," he said, as if in continuation of a discussion between them. "I cannot help it, my friend. I love her. Yes, and she loves me. It was her soul that cried aloud to me from the sea and I stood up there, on the rock, and heard and answered and obeyed. What a matter if she is the daughter of a king? Do you know, Craddock, that since she came to us I believe that I too, am of royal blood? You are angry because you know I love this princess."

"No, Ralph," and Craddock turned and faced his friend. "I am not angry; that is not the word; but I have grave misgivings. I wish that you had not taken me to the summit of the rock."

The broad shoulders of the Norwegian gave expression to a shrug. He raised his head proudly, and smiled at the clouds, the sky, and the world around him.

"I did not take you there, old chap," he said, "she called to me, and I went, although I did not know that she called. Blame destiny—not me. I am going to her now."

He strode away without another word, paused at the hatchway and said:

"May I enter, princess?"

Again they faced each other in the shallow cabin scarce higher than his stature.

"Princess," he said, and without being conscious of the act, he possessed both her hands in his. "I am a Norwegian wife, and yet, you love me. You are a princess of royal blood. I love you. It is something that our souls have done without our knowledge, perhaps in the unremembered past before these shells in which we live, were made. They knew each other then, and doubtless, loved. Today, mayhap after cycles of time which destiny cannot count, have come and gone, they meet again and remember. Have I spoken truth, princess?"

"Yes, God's truth," she murmured. He bent over her white hands and touched first one and then the other with his lips.

"That destiny which shapes our ends, in whose control our entities are as mere feathers in a gale, brought us through the tempest, face to face, and you Carlotta—you see I know your name—and you and I, will remember and will live up to this hour, henceforth. Some day when you are safe in the palace of your father, I will go to you there. I know not how, nor when; but I will go. Until then, princess, I may not say more than I have said."

She raised her eyes to his and looked, and looked, and looked. She did not speak; there was no need. And while their souls communed together in silence, Craddock leaped into the hatchway and called aloud:

"Sail, ho!"

Once more the Norwegian touched the forehead of the princess with his lips, and then, he left her and hastened to the deck.

Not three miles away to the eastward, a Danish cruiser was steaming towards them. Craddock was at the stern of the sloop wildly gesticulating to attract the attention of those upon the ship of war, and from the starboard bow there presently issued a puff of smoke followed by a distant report, and the cruiser glided into the less tumultuous waves beneath the shelter of the Devil's Nose. Davits swung outward, a cutter dropped into the sea, was manned and presently pulled under the stern of the sloop.

The cruiser has been sent from Tyboron in search of the belated yacht of the Princess Charlotte.

Twenty minutes later the princess had departed. The cruiser, with black smoke spouting from her funnels, was coursing with all speed for Denmark with the joyous news of the princess' safety; and Thor stood silently leaning against the tiller of the sloop, with one hand shading his eyes, watching the warship while she became smaller in the distance.

Presently he turned and motioned to Craddock to come nearer. Then, resting one hand upon the shoulder of his friend, he said, slowly:

"The daughter of a king, Craddock, but only a woman after all. I love her, and she loves me, and yet, she is the daughter of a hundred kings, she were no less mine. The daughter of a king, Craddock, but also the sweetheart of Thor, the Norwegian."

(The End.)

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## TO SEE THE ECLIPSE

John Hopkins Party Arrives at Pinehurst, N. C.

Preparations Already Under Way so That Nothing Will be Lacking to Take the Results Successful.

(Special Dispatch to Baltimore Sun.) Pinehurst, N. C., May 16.—This situation in the pine barrens of North Carolina was selected weeks ago as one of the eclipse stations for the United States Naval Observatory. It is a town consisting of many cottages and two hotels, all being the property of Mr. Tufts, of Boston. The place is one of the many winter resorts recently developed in the South.

Through the kindness of Mr. Tufts and his local manager, Mr. Benbow, several cottages have been kept open after the closing of the regular winter season in order to accommodate the eclipse observers. With the exception of these the town is practically deserted.

The situation in every respect is an ideal one for the purpose in the minds of the newly arrived party. The climate seems to be all that is desired, there are no woods or buildings to obscure the view of the sun and there are no curious persons to hinder the work or to get in the way on the eventful morning.

The location was selected by Professor Skinner, of the Naval Observatory. Under his able direction the erection of the necessary buildings has already proceeded rapidly, and nearly all the purely astronomical instruments are in place and are being adjusted.

This is but one of three stations for the observation of the eclipse which have been arranged for by Professor Brown, astronomical director of the Naval Observatory. The other two are at Barnesville and Griffin, Ga. At each of these places there is a corps of astronomers from Washington, together with many other scientists skilled in what is called astro-physical work. It is these last who are now engaged in mounting gratings and spectroscopes for the purpose of observing, on the day of the eclipse, the spectrum of the light which will come to the earth past the disk of the moon from the atmosphere of glowing vapors surrounding the sun itself.

In this connection two things are of interest to Baltimoreans. One is that all the gratings used in observing the eclipse, both in this country and abroad, were ruled in the physical laboratory of the Johns Hopkins University, under the direction of Professor Rowland. The other is that Professor Brown recently said in an interview published in New York that the men whom he found it necessary to select to assist in the spectroscopic work at the Naval Observatory stations were all Johns Hopkins men.

A number of the Baltimore observers have arrived. They are: Prof. Joseph S. Ames, Dr. N. E. Dorsey, Mr. L. E. Jewell, Dr. L. S. Mitchell, Mr. M. N. Parsons and Mr. N. E. Gilbert. They found part of their apparatus here, and at once proceeded to get it in place for the work on May 28th, the date of the eclipse.

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